

Maud Noble Cabin
Moose
Grand Teton National Park
Wyoming

HABS No. WYO-23

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Western Office, Division of Design and Construction
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PHOTOGRAPH-DATA BOOK REPORT
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MAUD NOBLE CABIN

Grand Teton National Park, Moose, Wyoming

ADDRESS: Adjacent to the Menor's Ferry buildings, Moose, Wyo.
OWNER: National Park Service
OCCUPANT: none
USE: Historic Point of Interest

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The cabin that stands today near the Menor's Ferry Building Complex figured prominently in events that led to the establishment of the Grand Teton National Park.

The cabin was built in 1916 on a site on the east side of Cottonwood Creek and was moved piece by piece to its present location by Maud Noble in 1918 when she purchased Menor's ferry, store and cabins.

On the evening of July 26, 1923, Miss Noble loaned her cabin for a meeting between Horace M. Albright, then Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, and local citizens interested in preserving a portion of the Jackson Hole area as a national recreation spot for future generations. Realization of the plan finally came in 1943 when John D. Rockefeller, Jr. asked the government to accept this and other properties he had acquired. The device used to accept the land was the creation of the Jackson Hole National Monument by Presidential proclamation. In 1950 the Grand Teton National Park was enlarged to include the Jackson Hole National Monument.

The often-remodeled cabin has served many purposes, including that of a tearoom, but is vacant today.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Miss Maud Noble, a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, came to Jackson Hole about 1915 as a guest of Mrs. George Woodward of the Bar BC (dude) ranch. She remained in the area and had Harry Clissold build a three room cabin for her on the east bank of Cottonwood Creek in 1916.

In 1918 Miss Noble purchased Bill Menor's ferry, store and cabins, and had Clissold move her cabin piece by piece and reassemble it at its present location on the Bill Menor homestead.

While at the Cottonwood Creek location the three rooms served as kitchen, living room and bedroom but after being moved to Menor's Ferry the three rooms were converted to two bedrooms and a living room. Cooking and eating were done in the Menor homestead cabin. Some time after Miss Noble's occupancy the bath and pantry-utility room were added by others.

When Miss Noble took over operation of the ferry across the Snake River she promptly raised prices from those charged by Bill Menor. She set fees at \$1.00 for Wyoming automobiles and \$2.00 for cars with out-of-state licenses. A large revenue was derived by Miss Noble in 1925 when people came from all over the country to see the Gros Ventre Slide.

The Maud Noble cabin was the site for a meeting that had important consequences in the development of the area. On July 23, 1923, Richard Winger, J. R. Jones and J. L. Eynon went to the cabin where they met Struthers Burt, Horace Karncross, Horace Albright (Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park) and Mr. Albright's assistant, Joe Joffe. All except the last two were local residents of Jackson Hole. They proposed to Mr. Albright the idea for the preservation of Jackson Hole for a national recreation area to be administered by a government agency. They believed that the conversion of the land from private ownership could be done by interesting some wealthy individual who would purchase it and donate it to the government.

Albright was sympathetic to the idea, and when local efforts to find a wealthy sponsor had failed, he was able to interest John D. Rockefeller, Jr. in the project when the latter visited Jackson Hole in 1926. Rockefeller established the Snake River Land Company in 1927 to act as his secret purchasing agent, and in the next three years bought out a number of ranches in Jackson Hole. In 1930, when it was revealed that Mr. Rockefeller was behind the purchases, opposition arose to the entire plan. The assets of the Snake River Land Company were transferred to the Jackson Hole Preserve, Inc., another Rockefeller financed foundation, which held the land and operated public accommodations in Jackson Hole.

In 1943 Mr. Rockefeller asked the government to accept the land as a donation to relieve him of the obligation of holding it. The Jackson Hole National Monument was created by Presidential proclamation to accept the land. In 1950 the Grand Teton National Park (which had been established in 1929) was enlarged to include the Jackson Hole National Monument.

The reason for use of the Maud Noble cabin for that meeting in 1923 between the Jackson Hole people and the Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park is not known, but it is probable that it was chosen because of the desire for secrecy. A meeting of the group in the town of Jackson would have been cause for talk, which would have defeated the goal of getting a wealthy backer to purchase the land quietly. Apparently Miss Noble herself did not attend the meeting, although she provided quarters for it.

In 1926 a bridge was built across the Snake River near the site of the ferry, causing the end of its operation after thirty years of service. Miss Noble sold the Menor's Ferry ranch property to the Snake River Land Company in 1929. A tea room was operated in the cabin during the summer months of 1927 or 1928 (after Miss Noble had moved) and again in 1950 and 1951.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL AND SOURCES

- Apple, Russell A., An Interpretive Prospectus for Post-Fur Trade History, Grand Teton National Park, Midwest Region, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1960; amendments 1963.
- Bonney, Orrin H. & Lorraine G., Jackson Hole and Grand Teton National Park, publ. by authors, Houston, 1961.
- Kendrew, A.E., "Report on Owned Structures of a Historic Character, Jackson Hole, Wyoming", 1942.
- Mumey, Nolie, The Teton Mountains, Their History and Tradition, Artcraft Press, Denver, 1947.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The original three room, one story, log structure has undergone numerous alterations and modernizations until the true character of the building has been lost. It remains as a preserved historic point of interest because of the planning meeting held here in 1923 that resulted eventually in the formation of the Jackson Hole National Monument.

EXTERIOR

Overall Dimensions - A one story log building, L-shaped, measuring 40'-0" x 16'-10" on the northwest or front wing, and 32'-0½" x 13'-6½" on the east-southeast wing.

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Foundation - Stone.

Wall Construction - Logs.

Openings - Entrances: Three exterior doors. The front door is a Dutch door of plank boards 3'-3" x 6'-9". Probably the only original door.

Windows: 6/6 double hung wood windows (living room) and wood gliding windows, 2 lights to 6/6 lights.

Roof - Gable roof, approximate pitch 21°, asphalt shingles.

Chimney - Cobblestone.

INTERIOR

Floor Plan - The original cabin had only three rooms; their use has varied over a period of years. It has an L-shaped plan with an addition (of no historical significance) tacked on. The living room is 14'-10" x 18'-1" with a stone fireplace centered in the northeast wall, framed by a window on each side. Originally the remaining two rooms served as kitchen and bedroom. A narrow room, 7'-0" x 14'-10", located on the west end of the north window probably was a porch, later closed in.

Floor - T & G pine (stained).

Wall and Ceiling Finish - Logs and chinking (of 2" saplings) now varnished.

Fireplace - Native cobblestone.

Doors - No remaining original doors.

Trim - Milled, squared stock.

Lighting - Electric.

Heating - Living room fireplace.

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GENERAL SETTING

Located to and west-southwest of the Menor's Ferry buildings and on the west bank of the Snake River on the original Bill Menor homestead, there is a log corral fence around the property. A log structure of similar construction is located behind the Noble cabin. Its original use is unknown.

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